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grain in her mortar or working in her garden near by. On market days she takes the produce of the family's fields to the town to sell. If she has young children, she cares for them while she does her other work, but when they are old enough, they help her about the house if they are girls, or, if boys, go with their father to the garden. From time to time, when house repairs are needed or there are implements to be mended, the man spends a day at home getting these odd jobs done; otherwise only serious illness in the family keeps him from his fields.

The times for meals have not varied since the days when Moreau de St. Mery described the eating-habits of the slaves.[1] In addition to the mid-morning repast, the only other meal is that eaten after the man returns from his field, this being the largest of the day. A wife does not sit down with her husband, but usually eats earlier with her small children and holds herself ready to serve him upon his return, when, if he is alone, she remains to tell him the day's gossip. Visitors are often present, for peasant etiquette demands that all comers be offered food, and, as one Haitian expressed it, "The peasant would kill you for the insult if you did not share your meal with him." Bedtime, as might be expected, is early.

On Sundays and on the days of festivals this routine is interrupted, when, if the occasion is of sufficient importance and the habitation is not too far from town, the peasant and his family attend mass. On Saturday nights there is usually a *vodun* dance, when the early hour for retirement is forgotten and all-night festivities precede Sunday's rest. On such days the principal meal is eaten at three or four o'clock in the afternoon, and all the adults share it together, while at one side the children are fed from the dishes of their parents in response to the insistent repetition of the demand "*Ba'm pa'm* — give me my portion." *

* This is an example of the elision characteristic of Haitian Créole, it being abbreviated from *Ba moin part moin* or, in French, *Donnez-moi ma part.*

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in Port-au-Prince, native or "créole" rice, red beans, and olive oil. The rice and beans are cooked separately, as are the yams and the two kinds of salt fish, each being seasoned with oil, salt, and pepper. The ordinary plates or calabashes on which food is offered the *loa*, or African deities, and the characteristic special double plates used in the twin cult, are prepared by rubbing them with olive oil. When the food is ready, it is placed in the proper containers in a closed room, and the family gather and say prayers of the Church — the Pater Noster, the Ave Maria, and the Credo — after which the *loa*, the twins, and the dead are called to come and eat. From midday until after sunset the room remains unopened, so that these beings may partake of the offerings placed there for them. Finally, when darkness has fallen, the family enter, and the food, whose essence is believed to have been consumed by the spirits, is eaten.

At times when a garden yields but little, the owner may suspect that black magic is the cause. He thereupon tries to recall any of his neighbors who might have occasion to feel envious of him, or those with whom he may have quarreled. He does nothing overt at this time except to watch for signs of hostility on the part of the suspect, but when the time for the next planting arrives, he not only obtains a strong charm to protect his own garden, but if he is particularly exercised and thinks his suspicions are well justified, he may set a counter-charm in the field of his neighbor who he believes has harmed him. This would only be done in exceptional cases, where, for instance, the crops of one cultivator had failed when the fields about his had yielded well; for, in the main, garden magic is directed toward protective rather than toward malevolent ends.

A certain proportion of the harvest is reserved for use at home and the remainder is sold in the markets. Since these markets, which as the primary channel of distribution rank with farming in their importance in Haitian economy, they may next be considered.

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may next be considered. Two types of markets exist — those in the countryside where produce is often sold at wholesale, and the town markets where retail trading takes place. In Mirebalais, as elsewhere, the principal market day is Saturday, though smaller markets are held on Thursdays, and roadside gatherings of women offering small amounts of foodstuffs or cooked foods are to be found everywhere. The country markets occur at present only on Tuesdays, though in earlier times the markets shared the days of the week in rotation. To heighten the importance of the towns, however, and to encourage the peasants to work steadily in their fields by concentrating the time spent at market, it has been officially decreed that the schedule given above be followed. Before this, the rotation of the markets in the commune of Mirebalais was as follows:

MONDAY: Yabodoum; La Civelle; Landale;
TUESDAY: Mirebalais;
WEDNESDAY: Dufailly (a fairly large country market); Labouli; Colombie (a very large market);
THURSDAY: Mirebalais;
FRIDAY: Chambo and Canarde (the most important country markets in the valley);
SATURDAY: Mirebalais.

The Mirebalais market is located near the central square not far from the confluence of the Artibonite and Tombe rivers, though until relatively recent times it was held in the *place* before the church. It occupies a large fenced-in space reserved for the purpose, which on the days of the great markets hums with activity. Each tradeswoman has her place there, which she retains by a kind of informal agreement, held to so well, for all its informality, that if a woman is compelled to be absent for a time, those who sit near by watch it for her and warn anyone who takes it that it must be relinquished when the original occupant returns. If despite this warning

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the newcomer persists in retaining the place, an informal appeal is taken to the local magistrate, who invariably settles the matter by deciding in favor of the original occupant.

Each woman tends to specialize in certain commodities, such as meat or cloths or notions or baskets. The venders of foodstuffs, other than meat, however, vary their offerings with the season. This latter class of sellers mainly comprises women who, living in the town, constitute a group of "middlemen," either buying produce at the country markets, or, going off with their pack animals into the back country, return with saddle-bags loaded with the purchases they have made direct from the farmer.[8]

Country women are also well represented among the traders, and as they come streaming into town on market days with their head burdens, or driving the heavily laden, slow-plodding donkeys, they fill the streets with color and movement that make up one of the most picturesque aspects of Mirebalais life. A load may consist of one type of produce only, or a woman may bring rice, maize, beans, and bananas, as well as home-made brooms and baskets. All transactions in the market are for cash, and there is no barter of any kind, for the pattern of a money economy has been too deeply lodged in Haitian tradition to allow any other mode of exchange. Prices are based on supply and demand rather than on any agreement between sellers, since contact with the capital causes the current prices paid there for all kinds of produce to be generally known. Another factor which enters into price-fixing, however, is prestige. It is regarded as a mark of incompetence for a woman, whether from country or town, to return home with unsold produce, and since the reputation of being a clever trader is highly valued, this is avoided when at all possible, and the vender adjusts her prices as the day wears on to insure that she will dispose of everything she has brought.

In Mirebalais, as elsewhere, the markets are best attended during harvest months, when by official count as many as

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443 eleven hundred and fifty sellers offer their wares in the course
443 of a single day. A careful tally is kept of these, since a fee for
651 the right of entry into the market is collected from all those who sell. Local tradespeople pay ten centimes each market day, but if they are sellers of meat they must pay five centimes a day for the right of entry, in addition to an annual license fee of 11.35 gourdes. A peddler of notions who goes about from one market center to another must, on coming to Mirebalais, either present a license costing 11.35 gourdes which grants the right to do business in any market of Haiti, or pay fifty centimes for permission to sell on any given market day. Other taxes collected for the upkeep of the market are particularly concerned with the transportation and sale of livestock. A fee of 3.50 gourdes is assessed when a cow is transported from one region to another or taken to the market for sale; one gourde must be paid the local tax-collector if a live animal is sold, the seller paying the tax; while if neither party to the sale knows how to write, a notary fee of two gourdes is assessed for drawing up a certificate of ownership. A fee of 3.25 gourdes is collected when a cow or bullock is butchered to be sold; for the slaughtering of a goat or pig, fees of two and one and a half gourdes, respectively, are collected.

443 A word must be said regarding the ubiquitous "small markets" that consist of a few women gathered at crossroads or at strategic points in towns on days when there is no large market, or wherever people gather. In Mirebalais such venders sit
[265] near the dispensary when it is open on Tuesdays. At cockfights and dances or at communal celebrations a small group of women is invariably found who sell drinks, bread, sweets, and other articles of food. At these "markets," too, such cooking aids as lard are sold, which both for these small markets and the larger ones is remelted and poured into little bottles selling for five centimes each. The returns from this petty trade are very small, yet in the aggregate they probably bulk at some figure that is not insignificant in the local economy.

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tioned this latter instance advanced it as a possible alternative to the custom found elsewhere in Haiti, adding that it was the duty of the living to honor their ancestors, and not for the ancestors to make provision to honor themselves, particularly since the dead can enforce the discharge of this duty by sending illness, bad fortune, and death to those of their descendants who are remiss.

To a very appreciable degree, what is inherited forms the foundation of whatever wealth a man may accumulate during his lifetime. Yet there are few, among the peasants at least, who do not seek by all means to add to their heritage, for among those folk the ambition to obtain more and more land is a dominating one. To this end the peasant skimps and saves, depriving himself even of his important needs, until at the proper time some choice parcel of ground comes on the market.

How does a man go about accumulating the funds necessary to amass property? Ordinarily a young man is given a plot of ground by his father, and the produce, as mentioned, is marketed for him by his mother, who saves the proceeds for him. When he marries, his wife takes over this task, and together the two strive to extract as large earnings as possible from his plot. In addition, a man may take a *job*. Such work, always paid for by the unit rather than by the day or week, is usually that of cultivating a plot of ground for its owner, and the amount agreed upon is paid when the field has been harvested. The young man at the same time can also cultivate his own fields and participate in communal labor. Another way of adding to the earnings of his fields is to help the large landowners on their cotton plantations. This work is paid for in kind with baskets of cotton, which in turn are sold to factors who come from the coast to buy both large and small quantities. A man may also increase his income by working in the cane-fields or at the caldrons when the sirup is boiled. Each

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before returning for the night's effort. By midnight the dance is in full swing. Though individuals here and there may absent themselves for a time, the attendance remains relatively constant, until as the crowing of cocks marks the approaching dawn, the number of dancers begins to dwindle rapidly, and with full daylight few remain other than members of the family. Only rarely does a *vodun* dance last well into the morning; what one sees after sunrise are the poorer drummers beating their mediocre rhythms for the young people who continue a desultory circling about the central pole. This does not mean that the *vodun* deities shun the daylight. It is merely because the participants must hurry away to get into their Sunday clothes for early mass in the village church.

The obligations of the family giving a dance are clearly established by tradition. Most important is the *tonnelle*, which they must build, and the drums and their accessory gong and rattles, which they must furnish. The drummers are not paid, but are given much attention when the refreshments that must be provided are distributed. These usually take the form of *clairin*, though coffee and bread may also be offered the guests early in the morning. The *clairin*, or raw rum, is passed from time to time, but not in sufficient quantity to cause inebriation. Those who supplement this with a generous supply of their own, and show the effect of it, are regarded with anything but approval.[2] Other accessories for the dance which must be at hand are the banners used to salute the deities, and the candles and water needed to bring those possessed out of the more violent stages of their seizures. If anything else is required or the guests desire further refreshments, these may always be bought from the women who set up their little stands at every dance.

Drums, iron, and rattles are indispensable for a *vodun* dance. The drums, of the characteristic hollow-log African type, tuned with pegs inserted in the sides and reinforced with twine wound about the stretched heads of cow-hide or goat-

1: Herskovits E-4,5 (1934) 1937 SV3 Haiti SV3
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land, whose bodies are buried in it, and whose spirits watch over it. As has been shown in the discussion of property, land in Haiti is owned privately, and, once title has passed, is subject to no alienation, except at the will of the owner — an attitude also held toward property of other categories, as is evidenced by the fact that most of the possessions of a man, particularly his livestock, are marked for identification, and theft is severely punished. Even the disposal of stray animals whose owners cannot be identified must follow well-defined legal procedure, in accordance with which they are held by the officers of the commune for a stated period of time before being sold at public auction. All marks on these animals are carefully noted in the records, so that title to them may be duly established.

In the organization of production and distribution an African mold, if not full content, predominates. The co-operative work-system, which is so important in maintaining agricultural production, is directly related to comparable groupings of West Africa, of which a distinctive form is the *dokpwe* of Dahomey, described when the African origins of Haitian culture were examined. The *combite*, as an instrument of co-operative labor and mutual self-help, with its tradition of giving no pecuniary reward for work done, but of making the feast which comes at the end of the day's labor adequate return — all these represent pure retentions of African practice. Even more striking is the carry-over in the attitudes which go with these outer forms — the manner in which the participants look forward with pleasant anticipation to taking part in *combites*, the enjoyment which they derive from their group work, and the verve with which the work is done are clear expressions of these attitudes. The role of the *combite*-song in exercising social control and enforcing conformity to local custom is entirely African, as is its function in stimulating work by setting a rhythm for it.

African, too, is the institution of the market, though in this

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case certain aspects of the historical development of Haiti have doubtless tended to reinforce African custom. Reference has been made to the fact that the great proportion of traders are women, a truism in Africa as in Haiti, where by general rule men are the producers and women the distributors of goods. In Haiti, however, the fact that for many decades men were likely to be arbitrarily impressed into military service by local chieftains when they came to town — particularly in Mirebalais, which had always been one of the centers of Caco activity — discouraged them from attending the markets. Thus African usage has here been reinforced by the historical fact of Haitian political instability. The fact that the proceeds from trading belong to the woman who does the trading, and that in consequence women are encountered who, though married, command independent means and exercise full control over their resources, is a carry-over of African tradition and, as in Africa, this gives to women a position in the economic world quite foreign to conventional European practice.

The form of the family as found in Mirebalais demonstrates that the African social grouping which comprises all those descended on one side of the family has largely disappeared there, though it is possible that at least the vestiges of it may have survived in other regions of Haiti. Yet in West Africa, though descent is legally counted on but one side of the family, psychological adherence to the families of both parents is everywhere important. Therefore it is logical to assume that this concept, reinforced by the pattern of dual descent and double familial affiliation of the French, has been retained in Haiti to the neglect of the aboriginal larger groupings, where, as has been seen, not only is relationship counted on both sides of the family, but, more significantly, the right to reprimand and punish is held and exerted by elders in both the maternal and the paternal lines. On the other hand, it is apparent that the feeling for larger relationship groups has not been entirely lost, particularly in the paternal line, when

2: Courlander B-5 (1937-1955) 1960 SV3 Haiti SV3
[P.112-H]

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11 and 12. *Market day. On each woman's head is the agricultural produce she will sell in the village or city market. When she returns she will carry a lighter load of things she has purchased, and tied in her handkerchief will be a few small coins.*

2: Courlander 8-6 (1937-1955) 1960 8V3 Haiti 8V3

[The Vodoun Pantheon]

the earth like the carrying pad that women wear to support bundles on their heads. Whenever Ayida Wèdo shifted his position there were earthquakes.[1] When the rainbow appeared after a rain it was said that Ayida had come out from under the earth to drink of the fresh water.

Damballa Grand Chemin (Damballa of the Highway). Another manifestation of Damballa as a protector of those on long journeys.

Damballa Verre. Another manifestation of Damballa.

Dereci Wino. Considered to be the daughter of Damballa. The ending of her name (-ci) suggests that at one time she may have been considered a wife rather than a daughter.

Dosi Wino. A member of Damballa's family.

Aclo Wino. A member of Damballa's family. Said to be a "work lwa" who aids men with their gardens, especially in time of illness.

Ezilie Dobu, or Dogba, sometimes spelled Erzulie. One of the "big" lwa of the Dahomé pantheon, a symbol of purity, and sometimes identified with the Virgin Mary. Her color is white, and services to her include a ritual sweeping and sprinkling of the earth and a perfuming of the air. Food offerings to her include corn meal and eggs. Male "horses" of Ezilie are sometimes bound to her by mystic marriages, and they are obligated to refrain from sexual intercourse on certain days which belong to her. There are a number of Ezilies, regarded as members of the same family or, in some cult centers, as different manifestations of the same deity. Some Haitians regard Ezilie Dobu as the ancestor of the Ezilie family and refer to her as Grand Ezilie. Note that there is a Dahomean town named Dogba at approximately 6° 6' E., 6° 50' N.

Ezilie Freda, or Ezilie Dahomay (Dahomé), or Ezilie Freda Dahomay. Like Ezilie Dobu, she is a symbol of purity and is identified with the Virgin Mary. Mystic marriages are performed with her, and her "horses" are obligated to refrain from sexual intercourse on certain days. She is also a giver of wealth.

Ezilie Wino. A sister or daughter of Ezilie Dobu and also related to Damballa.

Ezilie Masen. A sister of Ezilie Freda.

Ezilie Banda. A manifestation of Ezilie who is especially fond of the Banda dance.

Ezilie Jéanvre (Red Eyes). A stern and hard Ezilie who is often identified with Petro rather than Dahomé rites.

Aleon Freda. A member of the Ezilie cluster, regarded as a market-place protector. In Dahomey, Aleon was a protector of all public gathering places.[2]

Aleon Badakri

Aleon Dlasu Boko Bowo

Maîtresse Maizon. A special form of Ezilie as priestess.

Maîtresse Espagnole, or Pacotille. A person mounted by this Ezilie talks only Spanish.

Sogo, or Sogbo. A thunder deity who hurls stones to the earth when angered. Some of the stones thrown by Sobo are regarded as the sacred residence of various lwa. Sobo (or Sogbo) is a member of the original Thunder pantheon of Dahomey.

Sogo Badé, or Sogbo Badé, or simply Badé. A close relative of Sobo, regarded as the protector of the humbler (*bozal*) lwa. In Dahomey, Badé is sometimes referred to as the son of the deity Sobo.[3]

[1] [See Ellis, The Ewe-speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa, pp. 41-44; and Herskovits, Dahomey, II, 245ff. Cf. p. 354 Category 116. --Analyst]

[2] [Ellis, op. cit., p. 52. Cf. p. 354, Category 116. --Analyst]

[3] [Herskovits, op. cit., pp. 162ff. Cf. p. 354, Cat. 116. --Analyst]

3: Leyburn Z-4, 5 (no date) 1966
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bean country, and perhaps fewer than in any country in Latin America. The agriculture itself, with the exceptions now of those very few large-scale plantations in sisal and sugarcane, is adapted to small plots and is worked with intensive labor and few tools on hilly land. Compared with agricultural production, especially of cash crops, in most mainland Latin American countries, productivity is low. The yeomanry is conservative in its agricultural practices, and not ready to change unless the changes entail minimal risk and the gains to be realized are clearly demonstrable (Erasmus, 1952:20–26). Yeomen cultivate with three goals in mind: cash income from world-market commodities (for instance, coffee, sisal, vetiver); cash income from items produced for local sale and consumption; and subsistence. While they are heavily involved in production for sale, their crop choices and land-use patterns rest fundamentally on a subsistence orientation. All grow a substantial part of their own food, especially sorghum, maize, sweet potatoes, taro, manioc, malanga (*Xanthosoma sagittifolium* Schott), plantains and bananas, fruits and vegetables, and rice where possible. The land is invested with considerable affect: gods live in it; it is the ultimate security against privation; family members are buried in it; food and wealth come from it; and it is good in itself, even if not cultivated. While such attitudes are common in yeoman societies, Haiti's history of slavery, and of access to land through revolution, has given a special symbolic significance to landowning. Land is valued above all else and is sometimes held "uneconomically"—that is, even when the capital and labor power to work it are lacking.

Leyburn describes better than any other writer the history of land acquisition by the yeoman after 1804. The French plantations lay in ruins, never to recover, while early authoritarian attempts to restore the prerevolutionary economy under native Haitian leadership soon failed. In the course of a century, the Haitian people laid claim to their own soil, while population growth and the adoption of the French tradition of equal inheritance progressively reduced the average size of holdings. In spite of some plantation development after the United States occupation, most agricultural land in Haiti is still employed in small holdings, and "land reform" in the conventional sense—the breaking-up of large estates and the creation of a class of small landholders—is nearly irrelevant to Haiti's needs.

As today's yeomanry cultivates, so its women folk market. Nearly

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three hundred marketplaces serve the towns and countryside, some of them patronized by thousands of buyers and sellers on market days. By participating in active small-scale trade, the wives of the yeomen contribute in a limited way to national economic efficiency and growth. As in all heavily agrarian economies marked by poor storage facilities, inferior transportation, and low consumer incomes there is considerable substitution of labor for capital, and there are high losses through spoilage. Except for the marketing of export commodities, much time is consumed in bargaining, in carrying, and in hand-processing of various sorts. But these activities are the accompaniments of the general low level of development of the Haitian economy, not one of its causes.

The economic challenges posed by agriculture on the one hand, and by marketing on the other, differ significantly. Since these activities are carried out predominantly along the lines of a sexual division of labor, the Haitian countrymen and their marketing wives differ in some regards in their attitudes. Foreign observers of the nineteenth century commented regularly on the industry and energy of Haitian rural women, stressing their predominance in trade. Some writers have attributed this convention to the West African tradition, since women are the marketers, men the farmers, in many African societies. Leyburn, however, notes that the militarism and political unrest that have marked Haiti during so much of its history were serious impediments to peaceful trade. Women came to predominate in marketing, he theorizes, because men did what they could to avoid the towns, since they were often impressed into roving army bands if they traveled far from home. Whatever the historical causes may be, it has been established that the women of Haiti's countryside carry on most of the internal trade, while their husbands do most of the farming. These women, on the whole, know more about the towns, mix more easily with outsiders, and show more intrepidity in trade than the men show in agriculture. Yet it has been demonstrated that, for most of them, the scale of their enterprise is so modest and the economic opportunities open to them so restricted that their energy and daring can do little to increase the level of productive activity (Mintz, 1964:256–86).

Haiti's lack of large factories, mechanized production, and a skilled industrial labor force means that the country is unindustrialized by any usual measure.

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581 suspicion of legal complications is well founded: the priests therefore
794 try to concentrate their attack upon the remaining motives. Thus one priest issued a notice at a certain mountain chapel that he would perform no weddings there for persons who wore shoes; an increase in weddings followed. By such devices, and by constant sermons on the significance of the sacrament, he has persuaded many of his parishioners to be married, yet the vast majority of them continue in plaçage.[4]

581 Informally entered unions among the peasants, then, rest upon a sound, practical, economic basis. If the priests are ever to be successful in their campaign for more weddings, Haitian peasant economy must undergo a change; even then the plurality of women (if indeed it exists), now more or less absorbed by plaçage, will work against the reform.

562 It is confusing to speak of "status" in connection with the domestic
565 life of hard-working people, for status implies law, and law hardly touches peasant life. Custom governs all—inevitably, since the majority of peasant women have not been legally married, and since no peasant would willingly take a case to law. Yet women have a definite status as compared with men.

In almost every detail a peasant woman's life differs from that of elite women. The rule of life in country districts is unremitting labor
462 for the female from childhood up. She cooks and makes clothes,
565 labors in the fields after the men have cleared them, does the family
● 443 washing in the nearest stream, carries water, does whatever housework is required. Practically every Haitian peasant woman has her experience of going to market to sell the vegetables, trinkets, or
[484] other wares her family may produce, and to buy necessities. This trip to market may be short, or as long as twenty miles. One of the characteristic sights of Haiti is the seemingly endless procession of women coming down from the hills trudging, or rather swinging majestically along, with a great load on the head, or riding on the haunches of a tiny donkey loaded with bulging panniers. Arrived at

4. As a result of his campaign for more weddings he has had some unusual experiences. Once, in the midst of the wedding ceremony, a bride rushed out of the chapel and shortly gave birth to a child; when she was able to move again, the ceremony was resumed. Again, traveling into the mountains to perform a similar ceremony, he found a crowd assembled under a tree, assisting at another birth of an infant to a bride-to-be. Sometimes he encounters the argument by a peasant that he will not consent to a wedding until his spouse has proved her fecundity by bearing a certain number of children.

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the market, the women sit all day in the broiling sun, and in Port-au-Prince at least, sometimes sleep near by for the night, in order to complete their purchases and sales and to get their fill of companionable gossip. They are often accompanied by the youngest of their children, some of whom have to be carried.

Some observers profess to see evidences of a matriarchate among the peasants, for as a general rule the woman attends to the business dealings of the market place, handles the money, directs her children, and manages the household. If the man has more than one placée spouse, complete control of the farm is the woman's during the absence of her man. It is a superficial judgment, however, to speak of the peasant mother as a matriarch. The man owns the land, chooses his women, calls for help at the moment he pleases for preparation of the ground for planting; and when he knows his end to be near, summons all his families and disposes of his property as he sees fit. His decision is final. But he is no more a patriarch than his woman is a matriarch: they are economic partners in a struggle for existence.

By our standards, the woman is inferior to the man, not only in rights but in being one spouse of several. He may contract several unions, while she may have only one. She does more steady, if not more actual, physical labor than the man. When he is at home, she must offer him the best of the food. As usual in simple societies, however, the issue rarely arises as to superiority or inferiority of the sexes. Customary behavior is followed without much question.

There is one great contrast between élite and peasant women, in the matter of childbirth. The élite mother takes as much care of herself during pregnancy and parturition as would an American woman in well-to-do circles. The peasant mother, on the contrary, cannot allow herself the luxury of medical attention, nor can she spare the time to rest quietly. Like many so-called "primitive" women, she apparently finds herself little incommoded either by pregnancy or birth. Babies are born frequently in the market place, the mother having come down from the hills only that day with her goods. It is not unusual to hear of the birth of a child in a roadside ditch or in a grove by the path to and from the market town. The care given mother and infant is primitive: the navel cord is cut with a sharp stone or a piece of broken glass; a short rest is thought sufficient before the mother resumes her task. As might be expected, the death rate from infection is high and women age prematurely.

Parents are generally kind to their children, so far as physical

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as it is cursed by the present military despotism, the utmost that the women of Haiti can do is to keep their country just above the waters of bankruptcy and their households from complete despair.[9]

Since 1910 the military has been reformed, and the women are not insulted by soldiers and officers; Sir Harry's prophecy regarding the material benefits of removing the curse of military despotism was overly optimistic.

Rounding out the economic life of the peasant is the market, which provides an outlet for whatever surplus is produced, a source of needed supplies and a modicum of money, as well as an almost imperative diversion for hard-working women. The origin of Haitian markets may have been either French or West African, for both regions had them. They were certainly in existence by 1803 in Saint-Domingue, for Madiou speaks of the trade of the plainsmen of the Cul-de-Sac with the holders of what then was called Port Républicain (now Port-au-Prince), adding: "Each Sunday at Croix-des-Bouquets a market was held which brought together more than 4,000 cultivators, male and female, with the permission of the overseers or proprietors."[10] That so large a number came to the market is an indication of the social as well as the economic nature of this institution. Similarly, in the North in 1803, "Rochambeau, now master at the Cape, set about attending to the market established at Petit-Anse in July. After having suppressed all the markets which existed around the Cape, he opened a single and general one, 13th August, at Petit-Anse, one league from the city." The French general was making use of a familiar economic device to carry forward the economic life of the colony during the trying period of the wars.

In independent Haiti it was an almost immediate development that the women generally should do the marketing, the men being either required to work on the land or busy at military duty. It came to be accepted quite simply that going to market was a woman's work. From 1843 on through most of the century there was an additional reason why peasant men would not go to the market towns: recruits were needed, both for the army and whatever revolutionary coup might be brewing; a man who did not relish fighting did better to stay out of sight in the hills. In fact, this has even been called the chief

9. *The Negro in the New World*, pp. 196–197.
10. Thomas Madiou, *Histoire d'Haïti*, III, 24, 34.

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finally the license was obtained, it authorized the foreigner to carry on only a wholesale business—not with other foreign traders or with any resident aliens, but with Haitians in the six open ports.[10] The minimum of goods to be sold in any deal was fixed, so that no foreigner could inadvertently enter the retail business. Such licenses cost between $1,600 and $2,000, sums so large that few foreigners were drawn to the island.

Quite obviously the government sought to keep the external trade of Haiti under its control; it is equally obvious that under the licensing system, with its high fees and strict surveillance, only a small number of dealers were attracted, who consequently monopolized what little trade there was. Retail business being prohibited to them, their imports had to be sold by Haitians.

Not even this necessity created a middle class in the country, for the purchasing power of the peasants and other lower-caste Haitians was small; also the total sum of imports and exports was not large enough to support a middle class. The retail trade was chiefly in the hands of town women. These *marchandes*, as they were called, employed a number of hucksters—likewise women—to traverse the countryside surrounding the open ports, attend the markets, and report either every evening, or every week or month, depending upon their findings. The white man let his marchande know how much coffee he required, and this information was passed on to the local speculator who, at a very moderate profit, collected the coffee beans from the peasants in his neighborhood. Imports were distributed in like manner over the countryside. In its small way this system worked well enough, for the good faith of respectable marchandes could be counted upon both by the white trader and by the local dealers. A few European and American traders found it profitable to set up as marchandes the women with whom they cohabited, for this arrangement brought them nearer to the retail trade.

During Boyer's long administration the staple export was coffee, still cultivated on a few remaining plantations but mostly picked from plants growing wild, and sold by the peasants as their one source of money income. Sugar disappeared almost wholly from the

10. Namely, Port-au-Prince, Cap-Haïtien, Gonaïves, Jacmel, Les Cayes, and Jérémie; from 1822 to 1844 there were also two open ports in the Spanish part of the island which, during those years, was a part of Haiti.

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311 merly. Wherever the overcrowded Haitians have lived since 1815, there beauty has had to give way to gnawing necessity which lacked either the imagination or the means to be sightly.

105 One can stand upon a morne and watch a rain storm rush down the valley, bending the palm trees in its fury, and think Haiti still a magnificent sight. Then one must descend the mountainside past rickety shacks and rocky fields, and the feeling grows that not all the kindly simplicity of the people is enough to lift the country from its [134] dilapidation. As he nears the village, the afternoon scent of roasting coffee will delight him; but then he sees the squalor of village life and is reminded that three million souls are here trying to eke out an existence upon a small area of declining fertility.

Much in Haiti is picturesque if one can keep his mind from wandering to the conditions which lie behind the picturesqueness. [482] Women stride down from the hills with great loads on their heads; [443] aged crones, pipe in mouth, sit perched on the haunches of tiny donkeys with their bulging panniers; the great market square in the [492] town is a scene of noisy confusion with hundreds of women and [482] children, a mixture of smells, thousands of little piles of soap, candy, gewgaws, vegetables, gaping chickens tied together by the feet, [434] shirts, canes, bolts of cloth. All the weary women, however, must [146] trudge back up to their shanties on the mountainside when the market is over. Many of them do not see ten dollars in cash during the year, and their little children, with bellies bulging, give evidence [164] of undernourishment. Without doctors, without even the rudiments of hygiene, they manage somehow to subsist, or else die, frequently of disease which might easily have been prevented.

565 In Port-au-Prince and a few other towns live enough members of the élite to make one momentarily forget the plight of the masses. [342] The houses of the well-to-do are substantially built, if not often [351] attractive. Their garden walls are brilliant with bougainvillea, their walks with hibiscus. Tiny red lizards (analis) make flashes of color along the walls. On shady verandas and in the parlors one hears delightful conversation, eats excellent food, savors the pleasures of [575] civilization. The clubs of the élite are pleasing, their tennis is good, [526] their dancing graceful. To be among these families as a welcome guest is an experience in gracious hospitality which can never be [535] forgotten. Too soon, however, one must leave these havens of urbanity and pass through districts of the town which haunt the mind with their grim want.